

**MINUTES OF
CITY OF EDINA, MINNESOTA
TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

SPECIAL MEETING

PUBLIC WORKS MULTIPURPOSE ROOM

JANUARY 9, 2011

6:00 p.m.

City Council asked ETC to call a special meeting to advise the Council for Public Hearing on January 17, 2012.

ROLL CALL: Answering roll call were members Bass, Braden, Janovy, Nelson, and Schold Davis.

COMMUNITY COMMENTS – None

REPORT/RECOMMENDATIONS

REVISED FEASABILITY REVIEW

Richmond Hills Park

Assistant City Engineer, Sullivan, introduced Toby Muse from SEH, the consultant for the project. Mr. Sullivan started by giving an overview of the Feasibility Report.

- This neighborhood has some curb and gutter already. All new curb and gutter will be installed. Roadway will remain in about the same location.
- Selected utility replacement to include water main, sanitary sewer and some storm sewer to account for water drainage and other concerns.
- Warwick and Kent, Windsor and Kent intersections will be redesigned to more traditional “T” intersections to improve definition of roadway and right-of-way.

From meeting on December 17th, prior discussion included radius at these locations, bus operations, and drainage concerns. General consensus of the ETC at that time was not to include sidewalk on 56th Street or on any other roadway within the project.

Discussion among ETC members on January 9, 2012:

- This area is outside the school walking zone and is an “all bus route” to Countryside Elementary. There is a paved pathway along Normandale from Benton Avenue to Eden Avenue.
- Mr. Sullivan was asked what is looked at when evaluating a project for pedestrian improvements. Is it the sidewalk figure in the comprehensive plan and the potential to add sidewalks, or are there other improvements also considered, such as marking crosswalks, improving drainage (to reduce ponding on street), evaluating sight lines. For bike lanes, Mr. Sullivan was asked whether they look at the storm grates and longitudinal joints for example. Mr. Sullivan indicated they do replace storm grates, address ponding, and consider the longitudinal joints. Mr. Sullivan was encouraged to communicate to the Council and public the level of detail that is thought through with regard to pedestrian and bicycling improvements.

- Mr. Sullivan was asked whether street lighting is evaluated and whether current lighting is sufficient, for example for pedestrians. Mr. Sullivan stated that most are traditional lighting at intersections to delineate the intersection.
- Mr. Muse indicated questionnaires have been sent out to residents. He indicated six residents stated the need for sidewalks and even fewer preferred changing street lights.
- Members noted the project cost increased from the cost stated in the original communication to residents. Mr. Sullivan indicated that the original letter was a generic amount and neighborhoods that need more extensive restoration are not accounted for in original letter. Mr. Muse mentioned that the increase is partially due to repair to sanitary service lines, which have extensive root infiltration.
- Mr. Muse addressed the issue of school buses maneuvering in redesigned intersections. There will be a little overlap of the bus into the oncoming traffic lane, but this is typical of buses in any area of town. Cars have a tighter turning radius so will not present a problem.
- Mr. Muse commented that residents have reviewed the changes at the informational meeting and there was minimal comment regarding the reduction in pavement at the intersections with Warwick and Kent and the Windsor and Kent intersections. Mr. Sullivan stated that with the increase in boulevard space, driveways and irrigation systems will be extended accordingly. Snow plowing and snow removal will not be affected. Street lighting will be changed accordingly to illuminate the intersections.
- The ETC commented on the need for a sidewalk on Benton.
- Members discussed the existing sidewalk along Normandale Frontage Road that extends from Eden Avenue down to Benton and then terminates at East View Lane. This trail crosses seven streets of the project. Mr. Sullivan stated that since these streets have low level of traffic staff is not suggesting enhancing the crosswalks to visually continue pathway.
- Members asked what the process is for addressing traffic management concerns that will not be addressed through the project (i.e. additional stop signs, speeding on Richmond). A process should be identified to address these concerns.
- Mr. Sullivan was asked whether residents are informed that whether a sidewalk is installed is up to them. There was some discussion about how residents could get that impression from the wording of the survey. How does the City balance being responsive to resident preferences with an overall policy direction, such as Living Streets. The need for a pedestrian plan was noted.
- Regarding a sidewalk, the question was asked, "Where should our priorities be?" Although the ETC is not recommending a sidewalk in the neighborhood, it is not opposed to a sidewalk, The consensus was to not strongly argue for sidewalks in this neighborhood based on the information we have.

Recommendation

The Edina Transportation Commission is recommending the improvements as indicated in the feasibility report.

ETC doesn't have issues with this particular project but it is triggering discussion regarding a pedestrian plan.

Countryside Neighborhood

Mr. Sullivan started by giving an overview of the Feasibility Report and the discussions held at the November 17, 2011 ETC meeting.

- The neighborhood will have all new curb and gutter
- New water services and other selective utility rehabilitations
- Realignment of four intersections along Crescent Drive

- The ETC recommended the addition of sidewalk along Westridge Boulevard and Hillside Road.

Discussion among ETC members on January 9, 2012:

- Recognize that putting sidewalks throughout is expensive. Since there are kids walking to school and nearby parks, the ETC thought it was a reasonable compromise to increase the walk-ability and look at the most natural pathway through the neighborhood to the school and park. The most logical path would be Westridge Boulevard and Hillside Road to access Countryside Park and Countryside Elementary School.
- Mr. Sullivan stated that if the sidewalk was added, the roadway could be shifted slightly to better accommodate the addition of a 5' boulevard and 5' walk. A less than 5' boulevard creates too much heat from street and sidewalk and tends to dry those areas out. Intersections on Crescent will be tightened up.
- Mr. Sullivan stated that very preliminary estimates have the sidewalk costing approximately \$140,000. An assessment amount of \$600 - \$800 per home. (After additional design, staff expects each residential assessment for the sidewalk to be \$1700. NOTE: this information was determined after the meeting and included here for clarification). The cost would be split between the school-25%, residents-50% and the City-25%. This additional assessment would include all residents in the project area. The residents are not aware of the ETC's recommendation to add sidewalks.
- In all projects sidewalks and drainage should be considered to create pedestrian and bicycle safe routes. If Council sees this as the policy, then it is reasonable that they are being considered for any project. For future projects, letters and questionnaire to residents should address this policy to educate residents that Edina has a walk-ability goal and safe paths for all.
- Reiterated that there is Countryside Park, Bredesen Park, and school near to the project area. Recognize we developing a Living Street policy, but how do we implement it, what are the priorities throughout the City? Identify the best places City wide and then look at when reconstructing area? Where does the resident's input come in when making decisions?
- With limited dollars to be spent, would the determination for priority sidewalks be opportunity driven? Mr. Sullivan indicated we have more need than funding sources, but also have time-lines that we have to work within.
- Recommendation from prior meeting was if sidewalks end at Tracy do we need to look at additional crosswalks. Discussion about where crosswalks should be placed.
- Should feasibility study be done for the sidewalk? From staff perspective, felt the sidewalk could be installed, evaluating driveways, existing trees and place sidewalk on most appropriate side.

Recommendation

The ETC reiterated support for sidewalks as shown on page 9 of 12 of the feasibility report. Their recommendation is based on this area being in a school zone, near a City park, consistent with Living Streets principles and would make a good connection for any future sidewalk along Valley View Road.

The ETC will create an Advisory Communication to forward to Council as part of the public hearing. Chair Janovy will complete and Member Nelson will review.

Bass moved to create an Advisory Communication for the Countryside project, seconded by Schold Davis, the motion passed.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.